

# The epistle of one

[6.]

frend to another, of a strange fyre that was  
sene in the aire both longe and brode  
almost through al Germany, and what  
as well the godly as the vngodly  
maye or ought therof to  
loke for or feare.

 M due salutations remembred right worshipfull brother, thys  
shalbe to let you vnder stande that in the beginning of the yere of  
our lord. M. D. LXX. wherein we are  
nowe, the thirde after the feast of the  
birth of Christ, that is on childermas  
day: there appeared ouer our citie and  
all the borders of Swicerlande, two  
houres asoore day the aire beyng clear  
a very red fyre, in maner whole toge-  
ther, but that white furrowes or stra-  
kes came betwene, and it stretched  
out longe and brode almost a furlong  
brode, although in another place it se-  
med narower, but in lengthe three or  
four times so muche. So that unto  
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all the beholders in maner a whole  
mile long towardes þ North it seemed  
that some village or many, or els som  
towne had bene on a great fyre. And  
in many places the neighbours ran  
together as it were to quench the fire  
of some of their neighbours: and ther  
wer which thought that thei saw in  
this fyre of bloudy colour mani white  
fowowes or strakes , very like unto  
bundels of speares. But it continued  
not longe in one place , but remoued  
many furlonges further, and when it  
was day or rather towardes e'ye, by  
little and little it vanished out of sight  
being first gathered together at San  
gallie in maner of a great tower.  
By this ye may easly conjecture that  
this fyre was on the higher parte of  
the aire, because it was sene so far of,  
and almost folowed the mouinge of  
the aire, & yet not on þ highest aire þ  
there like unto the comets or blasing  
starres might be kindeled by the ele-  
ment of fire. And this was also faith-  
fully shewed vs, that it was so seen at  
Zurich, Clarouna, H̄agale, Constace  
and every where round about þ lake

or

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of Aezon, and Venise, and so likewise  
at Basill, and in the most part of the  
places of Swicerland , and the Recis-  
ans or Crisons. But whether it were  
sene any further we shall know short-  
ly. And in certain places betwene Hu-  
ricke and the litle towne Elgia thei  
say that flames of fire fel down to the  
grounde and amaz'd therewith a cer-  
tain man that traueilid by the way.

And a certaine crediblie man of the  
territorie of Hurike tolde me all the  
matter, which he did diligently mark.

Fyrst, when the night was cleare,  
and yet ear it was day it became dar-  
ker, euен in the setting of the moone  
it seemed unto him as it wer a certain  
light to rise from the earth as if di-  
uers beames and of sundrie colours  
(as when the Sunne by the droppes  
of raine maketh divers colours) shuld  
so by and by arise from the ground as  
it wer drawen vp toward heauen, and  
there gathered a rednes as though a  
certaine cloude had wared red, & stode  
so a lytle while, and anone after a cer-  
taine cloud went through the middest  
thereof, and then was scene a shuting

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out of fyre as it had bene starres oufe  
of a burning cloude.

The signification of thys wonder-  
full matter, righte learned syz, which  
I haue studid vp to exercise my self  
withall, & to styrre vp my minde to y  
author of it, I write vnto you there-  
fore that I may hear your iudgement  
vpon the same which I much esteeme.

The signification of the  
wonder.

1 For as much as such prodigious  
wonders chaunce seldom in thys our  
time, and olde men far stryken in age  
can not remembre to haue sene anye  
such therfore it is to be feared & loked  
for some vnacustomed hap to folowe.

2 The bredeth and bignes of it was  
notable, through which it was sene  
every where long and brode, and as  
it were every where nere hand, wher  
of we diuine and pronounce a greate  
euyll to folowe, and that not to one  
region alone, and therin al men to be  
perplexed and doutfull, to what place  
they maye chieffely goe, and where  
they may resist the ragynge fyre.

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3 The colour of the fyre it selfe like  
to bloode what betokeneth it but  
warre: In whiche the lande shall a-  
bounde in the blood of the slaine and  
all thinges wasted with fyre:

4 And thys calamite is chieselyc  
threatened to those people to whom  
so euer thys wonder was seane nea-  
rest.

5 And because it apeared before day-  
lyght and of a sodeyne & vnlok'd so  
and in maner to al persons as yet sle-  
pyng, therfore it betokeneth the cala-  
mities approchynge to be looked for  
to come vpon manye not thyngynge  
nor preparyng them selues, or repen-  
ting, and ouer carelesse in themselues  
and not only such particular calami-  
ties to come, but shortly an vphoped  
iudgement of the whole worlde.

6 And that within a shorte tyme af-  
ter this: because this burning of the  
aire was seane every where as it had  
bene present & nere as I haue sayde.

7 And because it endured but a  
shorte tyme, therefore it maketh vs  
hope that the persecution shall not  
continue longe.

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8 And because by and by after it being banished away the Sunne arose, we hope the cleare light of the wurde of god to be the end of all persecution.

9 And that rednes was not al whols together, but deuided as it were with certaine cleare and bright spaces or furrowes by the which also starres appeared, that signifieth, that in the middest of those calamities and persecutions God wil comfort his elect, and in that fire shall issue out the heauenlye brightness of the gospell.

10 And now seeing this wonder was sene in the beginning of the yere, therfore shal we doute whether this calamite shall indure a whole yere? For nowe also great mocions do begin to come furth, and thei wil come further except god turne awaie great euils, or rather dare we hope because it appeared by & by after the birth of christ that is the thirde day after, within so many yeres hence, that our lord Iesus Christes doctrine wilbe setfurth farre and broad and as it were restored againe all falshold being expulsed and so the godly to loke for to beginne

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Gyrns a newe yere and a new kynde of lyupnge.

11. And because that bloudy fyre appeared on childernmas daye we do not deut but that he which was sometime a reuenger of the bloode of the innocent children will now also become a reuenger and punisher for those godly and faithful men, which haue suffred persecutiō and death for his name sake. And for them whiche as yet remain he wyl be a defender and maintener, so that finallye they wyl acknowledge him to be a fater of their cause, and by amendment of life answer therunto and prepare them selues with prayer and sobrietie for the grace that is to come.

12. The shuting of starres as it were the falling of them do doubtles signifie vnto vs, that the day of the great iudgement is at hande. A little before the which day that such forewarning signes shoulde be sene our Lord Christ hath warned vs afore hande longe a goe.

But in no age at anye time hath ther be sene so many and so great and

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Kraunge wonderous sygnes euerywher abroad as within these few yeres: that we ought altogether already to consider that it is by tokens signified unto vs that the latter day is not farre of, and both by other wonders & chiefly by this which is not particular nor terrestriall but almost uniuersall and celstiall excepte we utterly slepe with ouermuch carelesnes and securite. But first must that Babilonicall beast beynge stuked with the bloode of saintes and yet not killed nor satisfied be cast downe, and the sincere gospell preached agayne through the whole worlde. The which that it maye very shortly come to passe we shal pray vnto the almighty gracious and great God by our lord Iesus Christe in the holy Ghost.

And yet therfore we ought not to promise a carelesse securitie to our selues that the kingdō of the prince of Christes enemies shall decaye and fal: but except we doe throughtly take heede to oure selues by and by wyth amendment of lyfe, and ceasse to bragge of a vaine faith , beynge our selues instruced

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fed and furnished with no good workes, we shall firste be punished by the same. For seynge oure lyfe of all in maner for the moste parte answereþ not to oure profession we haue manye wapes deserued moste greevous punishmentes: and more truly then our aduersaries, for this cause that in so great lyghte of the knelwen truth, we be kyndled or moued wyth no seruencye of sincere religien but wallowe and are wrapped in all kind of vices and wyll almoske suffer no disciplyne eyther private or publyke: And soþ the moste parte all Magistrates wyll not onely haue Dominion in the commune wealth and in Citties, but they also wyll haue rule in the church, but they will not commyt them selues to the common discipline of the same.

Finally, the pastors and ministers of the churches for the most parte be full of ambition, couetousnes, wantonnes, and other vices, & be no better than those whome they ought to teache and feede wyth the worde of GOD, but rather much worse.

Where,

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Wherfore it is greatly to be feared þ  
nere the day of the lord draweth vpon  
vs, and that to vs that ware so colde  
shalbe moued and not to a fewe of vs  
and priuately as hath bene heretofore,  
but a common publike and vniuersal  
sore of persecution wherwith we shal  
be warned more then inough: for frō  
the aduersaries of Christis church and  
his members(except God tourne it a-  
way)shal go out the fyre whiche hath  
bene of longe time prepared for vs, &  
from Italie vnto vs and towarde the  
North( þ which way þ wonder & pro-  
digious forwarning did incline) shall  
it come furiously vpon the christians.  
Notwithstanding we hope and hum-  
bly praye vnto the most gracious and  
mighty god the father of our lord Je-  
sus Christ with lowly and devout har-  
tes, that this euell may sone after be  
turned from vs: not for vs but for his  
name sake, and the holy worshippers  
of his annoyncted. For the bloode of  
those whiche longe ago alreadye hathe  
bene moste abundantly spylled & shed  
or consumed with fyre throughout al  
Germany, Fraunce, Italy, Spaine,  
and

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and other regions (þ that seuen hea-  
ded and horned and bloudy Babiloni-  
cal beast with whome the kinges and  
princes of the earth haue committed  
and do commit fornication) may now  
seme altogether to haue burste out of  
the bowels of the earth wyth a fla-  
myng brightnes, and that the same  
burnyng in the ayre betokening a re-  
uenging from the Lord (which is the  
defender and reuenger of hys) hathe  
mingled together: That al men may  
see and understande the evident cause  
of this wonderful forwarning. Ther  
soze god wil punish together his whō  
he loueth that they may be amended,  
and wyth them or at the least by and  
by after the enemies of his name whi-  
ch go forward obstinatly in their ma-  
lice, and in the persecution of the sain-  
tes. It becometh vs to acknowledge  
our fautes and to aske forgiuenes and  
not to despaire by and by at the firsste  
cruell assaute of Antichrist whatsoe-  
uer they be. For he sayth that he is in  
danger and assauted himself and that  
on every side is great fallyng aways  
frō him, & lest he shulde vtterly be for-  
saken

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saken he proueth al thinges to the extremitie. We ys we wyll continue in the sincere calling vpon the Lord and remembre to kepe our selves in prosperite, so many as god wil haue kept safe from these calamities shall proue and see a happy successe and spreading a-brode of the gospell, through out the whole wold: and the ruine and decaye of that prince or ruler which vnder the tytle of the name of Christe is against him being now of late begon wholy to be performed. For this enterprise of his as it is to be thought to be the greatest so is it to be supposed that it shalbe the laste: and as he did seuer this wonder from the daye that was commyng, even so it is to be hoped that at the cleare preaching of the Gospel and the last iudgement shortly comming vpon it, al euil shal haue an ende. So we for our selues ought so to gesse well with good and valiant mindes. For the almyghtye can if he wil deliuer vs from all calamities, at the least if he do not those are happy ones which die strongly in the confession of his name for Christ

and

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and the truth. But vnhappy are they whosoeuer thynde them selues conquerours agaynst Christ.

That prodiges or wonders be done or  
styrred vp by god, contrary to the  
sayings of the Epicures.

A Ristotle in his syrte boke of celestiall speculation and. b. chapter, in mencionyng of other thynges which he calleth fyrye speculations, writheth thus. There be sene sometymes in the night theaire being clear many appearinges ( he calleth them horrible sightes) to mete in the ayre. As be gapyngs pittes bloody colours the cause whereof is even the same, which is of the other aforesaide. But next before he had sayd that of a certaine vapour or exaltation that is whot & drye kindled in the hyghaire be made both certaine other speculations, as beames, Goates, blasynge starres, and also that which is called Thlor, that is a flame or burning: and he sayeth ys that vapour be kindled & shut forth it self wide and brome, it se meth

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meth oftentimes to burne like a flanne  
as strawe when it is kyndled in the  
felde. &c. Of vapours truly (by the o-  
pinion of the sayde Philosopher) whi-  
ch be sene in þ high aire in the cleare  
nightes, some in dede burne and that  
longe time, as blasynge starres: some  
a short time, as flames torches, goa-  
tes, shutyng starres. Some other ap-  
peare to be somewhat that thei be rot  
and they may properly be called hor-  
rible syghtes: as cloudes somewh-  
cleare of colour, but chieffely red or  
colour and purple or bloudy: for other  
colours can scantily appeare, namely  
such as arise by þ reflexion of bames  
or such as by comtrion be white & si-  
ty. Likewise such as be called gapings  
or pitres, &c. And there be also which  
thinke that there be suche colours in  
dede. And it mai be thought that som-  
tyme bloddye cloudes be in dede and  
sometyme do apeare so. For we haue  
red often that ther hath rained blood  
and sometime that it only appeareth  
so, by the reflexion of the light. Tru-  
ly it is not to be doubted but that both  
ther be and also appeareth or semeth  
a bloody

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a bloody colour of burnyng in þ night  
and of flames, chieffely seyng the fla-  
me or the inflamed matter and sub-  
staunce so thicke. And perchance  
more in the winter when vapours to  
be inflamed or in dede in flames brea-  
ke out of the earth go vp, by an ayre  
that is colde and moyste and grosse,  
even as of a grene peace of woode the  
flames appeare to be more red. Per-  
aduenture some beyng persuaded by  
these philosophicall reasons, wyll  
thyk this our wondrous or strange  
token or bloddye colour or fyre they  
wyll name it rather a flame or celesti-  
all burnyng) vtterly to be a naturall  
thyng, and such as the causes thereof  
maye be sufficiellie gathered out of  
the very bosome of nature: and to be-  
oken nothyng els but peraduenture  
some naturall effect: as some mutati-  
on of the ayre and of the constitution  
and course of the yere: or some pesti-  
lence at hand or immediatlye folow-  
ing: amonge the signes of the whiche  
nature thei learned are wonte to put  
fyry speculations, as gapynge, bur-  
nynges, comets, shutyng starres, &

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other thynges that by nyght maye be perceyued in the ayre. For although in this tyme of the wynter vapours boate and drie, and to be inflamed, ar not wont to b:reake out of the earth: notwithstanding (he sayth) it is to be thought that they beyng the longer shut in the earth with great frost, being the more abundantly gathered together, b:reake out at the length with more violence when the waycs be opened, and being raised vpon high in the hyghest ayre the heate beyng restrained by a repulsion and let, or els that that colour was made by the beames of the sonne then beyng neare to the rising being either kindled or els only appearyng by reflexion and turning backe againe: and those whyte furrowes were beames of the Sunne brought in that part onely whereon the substance of the vapours being gathered together was thinne. For the beames of the Sunne appeare muche more in the high mountaines then in the lower places. Also as it is written in histories, thys hathe also happened in other places. And greate  
burnings haue appeared so many vapours were gathered being long shut within the earth by the strength of colde, and chiefely in places of mountaines whose bellies and waies be for the most part full of such vapours. These and suche lyke thinges perchaunce mē that are curious in philosophie, or also vterly godlesse, as Cypire and suche other couetous persons will put furth, and so persuade vs by this meane to feare nothyng. The authour Cicero of divination (sayeth) this only reason, by the opinion and testimonie of the expositors of monstrous thynges availeth against all shewes monsters and wonders. If that whiche coulde never be done, be done, if it maye not be to be incurred at. And so it to be no monstrous thing or wonder that may be done. But it was som great strenght whch opened the shuttinge of the earth, by it it may appeare. Because that in some places about midnight an earthquake went before: as certain watchmen did obserue it at Hauick, and certain other hard the sh-

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W.ii. kyng

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Kyng of yron instruments and plats  
of glasse, other salo gapyng in maner  
of pittes, and the dai before the earth  
opened neare vnto Tübinka. So thei  
do iudge that are indued with mans  
Wisdom. But we out of the holye  
scriptures, and out of the treasure of  
the eternall and diuine wisdom, and  
out of the trew mouth of our lord, say  
that such wonders be sent from god,  
god doyng it other aboue nature, or  
contrary to nature, or els vsyng na-  
turall thynges to the signifying of  
hys wyl, we saye and do beleue it, al-  
so histories do witnes, that always  
great calamities haue folowed after  
suche wonders.

Out of the booke of Julius, of prodegies  
or wonders: made. 505 . yere after the  
makynge of the cytye.

T. Gracco M. Juuentio Coss. amōg  
other wonders that he rehearseth,  
sayth: that the forme of two Hunnes  
were sene in the day, the ayre burned  
there was often lightuyng, storme  
and tempest.

P. Scipio Nasica Cn. Martio Coss.  
It is red, that the ayre in the nyght  
burned

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burned, and much lightning fell.

P. Africcan and Lelio Coss. ryuers  
of blood flowed out of the earth, and  
in the night yaire was sene to burne  
A star dyd burne by the space of two  
and thrytye dayes.

C. Cecilio Cn. Papprio Coss. in the  
night the mount of Albane was sene  
to burne, houses burnte with light-  
ning and tokenes out of heauen. The  
lande of Lucensis gaped abroade. In  
Fraunce the aire was sene to burne.  
The Danes and the Dutchmen pas-  
sed the Alpes, brake the league and  
made murder of the romaynes and  
theyz felowes.

Lelio. L. Domitius Coss. among  
otherre prodiges or wonders whiche  
he rehearseth saith: In Italy a bur-  
nyng torch appeared in the ayre, and  
all the aire was sene to burne.

L. Martio, S. Julio Coss. in y lande  
of Anaria the earth opened & a flame  
arose vp, & dyd shene in the element.  
About the land of Khegium, parte of  
the Citie that is towardes the Sea  
was ouerthowne wyth an yearth-  
quake.

23.iii. Seneca

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Seneca in hys fyrist booke of naturall que-  
stions and. xv. chapter describeth a won-  
der or strange thyng like vnto ours.

A Monige the lightnings (sayeth he)  
whiche the Grekes call Sela, maye  
put that fyre that was in the ayre, &  
we haue red it often times in histo-  
ries, the which burnyng was so high  
that sometimes it was sene amoung  
the starres, and sometymes so lowe,  
that it seemed some fire a far of. A com-  
pany of men of war vnder Tiberius  
the emperour (beyng amased when  
the aire for the most part of the night  
did burne) ranne to Colone for suc-  
cour, the fyre not beyng cleare but  
grosse and smokye. Of these lighte-  
nyngs no man douteth but they haue  
a flame which they shewe, it is a cer-  
taine substancialle of them. But in the  
former lightnings was a bow and a  
crown of some certaine substancialle,  
but it pleased vs not. &c.

Out of the booke of Polidor Virgill of  
wonders and strange thynges.

In

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In the yere of our saluacion. C. xii.  
a burnyng lyght in maner of a to-  
wre wyth great bryghtnes was  
sene to fall out of the ayre: when Je-  
rusalem was taken of the Turkes.

Wonders or strange thynges taken out of  
the rehersal of M. Frytschy of Laubany.

In the yere of oure Lorde. M. C. xl.  
the aire was sene to bourne often-  
tymes, and many starres were sene  
to fall from out of the skye into the  
earht. Burning lightes, fyry dargetes,  
and flyinge fires, were often tymes  
sene in the aire. Newe starres were  
sene. Celestial fires arose mani wais.  
There was sene in the ayre a brighte  
fyre, a company of horsemen and fote  
men to fight together, and cities, and  
swordes, and bloody vapours, were  
also sene. &c.

In the yere. M. C. and. xx. There  
was sene in the aire bloody cloudes,  
a crosse, and a whyte man. Euen at þ  
time men thought a destruction shuld  
come vpon þ whole world. It is writ-  
ten in Chronicles, that suche strange  
things doe signifie ciuell warres.

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Of those thynges whych folowed,  
you may reade at length in þ Chroni-  
cles of Boem, set furth by Auentyne  
in the leafe. D. C. xv.

In the yere. M. CCC. lxxv. the aire  
was sene to burne all night.

In the. M. D. L. thre syzye globes  
wer sene in the aire in þ night in Mis-  
nia Lipsia, which certaine students &  
famous men did beholde.

The yere M. D. L. I. the xxviii. day  
of January at Ulisbon in Portingal  
were sene in the aire bloody roddes,  
and horrible syzyes, & it rayned bloode  
also. Furthermore there was such an  
earthquake that two hundred houses  
were terrible shaken and throwen  
downe in þ which shaking more then  
a thousand men perished.

The yere. M. D. L. IIII. the first  
day of February at Cathalane a citie  
of Fraunce, after the musteringe of  
the hoste whiche the kyng of France  
had commaunded to be done in that  
place, a wonderfull strange sight was  
sene abont the Moone. For a greate  
fire arose from the East part, & went  
to the West. And the Moone seemed in  
maner

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maner of a mighty great fire brande.  
The flame of thys syze raged wyth  
great noyse, often castynge oute bla-  
syng sparkes in the ayre, none other-  
wyse then when a smith beateth vp  
hot iron: thus saith Fritschus. Ari-  
otle nameth such syze a goat.

The answere of a godly learned frende  
vnto the aforesayde letter or Epistle.

T hy letters. Tl. C. were givien vnto  
me with the boke of wonders.  
For the whiche your gentlenes I  
geue you mooste heartye thankes. At  
your departure you dyd declare all  
thinges abundantly and very plain-  
ly. In the meane tymie I praye God  
that for his mercy sake he wyl turne  
al things to þ best. For to syzyre you  
vp, I haue added many things whiche  
you shall here reade.

The signification of the straunge  
wonder.

A ll men doe confesse wyth one  
mouth, this vnaccustomed straige  
wonder to signifie som great euil  
to these countreys: so I thinke þ cau-  
ses of the sayde euyll, to be so neare  
B. V. vnto

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vnto vs, that it shall perse y eies and  
mindes of all men. And seyng for the  
most part the calamities of mankind  
be sermons of repentance , although  
the common people through errore  
do alledge mani other causes of euils  
not wandyng this fire of y ayre is an  
euidēt argumēt̄ token of y wrath of  
god, that without it be a few I think  
there is none so foolyshē or so mad,  
which understandeth not that it is to  
come. We beleue verely that we shal  
not be cast out of blisse , because it semeth  
that we shalbe so punyshed for  
oure sinnes : because that the crosse &  
aduersitie doth bryng alwayes more  
profit vnto the churche, then rest and  
slothfulnessse. Of this commeth the  
common Proverbe.

The bloode of the Martyrs wate-  
reth the Garden of the Lorde.  
But although our enemies farre ex-  
cede vs in all kynd of evyl, yet notwithstanding  
we be not much inferior vnto them. Superfluitie is a profitable  
instrument & occasion, you wyll saye  
the moste parte of vs do want it, not  
superfluitie . Religion also on oure  
part

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parte is a lytle neglected & beginneth  
to be gainfull, no lesse truly then the  
Romains in time passed. For we shal  
finde but a few dinines whiche wyll  
vouchsafe to leke poore Christ in the  
cottage and stable. Manye of them co-  
uet fat benefices, for the whiche they  
serue none otherwyse then thei wold  
serue for y sacrifice of the aultar. For  
that cause is there so much hatred, so  
much priuy backbiting which increa-  
seth dayly and hourly more & more, y  
ther is none more deuided then thei, in  
whō ought to be most loue & concord.  
These be the times which Eusebius  
setteth furth in the beginning of hys  
his eyghte booke vpon ecclesiasticall  
histories: who desireth any Dioclesia-  
an whych may restore the weake me-  
byes vnto their health agayne.

God truely gouerneth hys church  
by fyre, the whiche name is called in  
scripture crosse and persecution, whi-  
ch notwithstanding as I hope shall  
not be longe, no more then this mon-  
sterous fire was longe, whiche lasted  
with vs no more then an houre, and  
that before day lyght. For the Psal-  
mograffe

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Mograffe compareth the furye of the vngodly lyke vnto fyre amongst the thornes, which maketh a feruent fire and when it appeareth to be most vehement, then soddenly it falleth and is tourned into ashes.

But although thys fyre wyth hys heate dyd inwrap the hyghest mounaines, therefore not onely the base states but also the highe monarcches shall come to ruine: notwithstanding the stars whiche shone betwene, that is, the ministers of the churche shall not be put oute of their seate: which setting the worde of god before theyr face, shal shyne in darke night of persecucion by the cleare light of the gospel vntyll the daye wished for ware bright, and the Sun of righteousness shyne vpō me. But one star was sene to fall from heauen, which being drawn by hys fyre dyd furrow in the middest. It is to be thought, that one doctor or other, either for feare of the greate threatnyng, or els being drawn by hope of some promosion, shall be cast out of his degré. Therfore the Lord is to be p̄aid vnto, that he wil defende

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defende vs standing in the confession of a sincere faith. For this cause it is good for all godly men to thinke that the scourge of the lorde is afore their doores: whome notwithstanding they by the mouyng of chaunces shall get, god onely knoweth which ruleth the causes of all thinges. We wyll onely bryng those thynges which be like the truth, and seime not disagreble from the worde of God. For the worde of the lord ought to be a lantarme to our feete, and a light to oure stappes. By it we may learn better y cause of our aduersities, then may be perceived by any such wonders, which god sendeth commonly for the reprobate and stiffe necked men, amongest whome the worde of God taketh no place, that all their erasures may be cut awaie. Notwithstanding I do not deny that there be sermons of repentaunce, whych not wythstandyng they that are destitut of the gouernment of the word of god do take never the latter. For we see vngodly and wycked men whych beyng associat with hys vnbeliuyng Jewes, require a sygne from heauen,

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heauen, which if it apeare, then with full voyce they crye out, oure synnes require such wonders: but they of the part of the euangelicall doctrine, doe bear these thinges patiently and de-  
rue part from them selues to other, and euery one that speaketh of repen-  
tance with the mouth, seldom doth it in dede. The only Christians in whō  
the light of the worde of god shyneth  
knowledge their synnes, and by the helpe of god studieth to reforme their lyfe to a better state, whome in these present calamities this one thing can comfort them, that they understande god by his syngular grace to tourne theyz deserved paynes into marty-  
dome: through whiche is caused that they also comfort themselues, in whō  
is this gyfte of God, that not onelye they beleue in Christ, but also suffer for hys name sake. For although our synnes be greate, yet notwithstanding we shall not seele the furye of the chiefe enemyes of Christ, but for the sincere confession of the faythe, whych we maye declyne from ys we wyll go from the doctrine of the gos-  
pell

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pell. The almighty and greate God for his divine grace, and singuler aids of the holy gost, bouchsafe to kepe vs Amen.

The authour answereth againe to thys fyre epistle: and approueth it, not wþstanding (sayth he) the stars whiche fell out of that fyre wonder, I had rather interpretate to signifie the aduersarie of Christe with hys, whiche as hitherto haue bene counted as starres, and shal fall headlong out of heauen as Lucifer dyd. &c. That is they shal fall from that usurped au-  
thoritie which they now haue, which the authour of all wonders and esse-  
ces grant. So be it.

Certayne Eglogs taken out of diuers epistles  
of crediblie men, and certayne prynct  
bookes, prynct at Norynbergh and  
Vinaria, briefly set furth vpon the same  
wonder: so that it doth agre wþ those  
epistles or letters set oute afore, whych  
were almost omitted.

That misterous fyre was not sene  
at August, Clindelitorū, nor near  
about it, but it was sene not far from  
August: as about Peurzā, Landsper-  
gen,

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gen, Norinberg, and in the dukedom of Wittenberge, in Belgicke, and also towardes Hungarye, within thre dayes after Christemas, but not in all these places on one daye: So that many of the neyghborz thought that it dyd burne, and ranne to quench it: and the fyre fallynge from heauen in another place made them soys afraid: This did a certayne noble man write in his epistle or letter. We read in a printed lease that this fyre was sene towardes Eecelhemp, Frochhemp, & Bamberge: like wyse at Campodune and in many other places. And a credeble man wrote vnto vs that it was sene in the region of Ulme and in Athesina: Lykewyse at Lindauia, and in the monarchie of Bauaria, neare vnto August (not wstandinge it was not sene in the citie of August) also to warde Vienna, and about Anwarpe. In the booke printed at Clinaria, we read that thys strange wonder was sene, the ayre beyng cleare & no cloudes at all, so that it occupied þ fourth parte of the heauen wyth such brightnes that one might easly see and perce

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ceyue anye thyng. For the fire was great brode and longe (in maner as if some great citie had ben wholly al of fyre) disseuered wþ thre white strakes or furrowes of the which the one part appeared of the colour of bloode tempered with some other thing, and the other part was somewhat thicker, & the last part at the going away of it, it was compassed about with a darke and thicke cloude. Other sayde that the white strakes were sene at the beginninge wyth the fire, not beyng verye red abouthe the middest, but a certayne clearnes mirte with rednesse, through which also the starres appeareld. In some places warning was given by ringyng of þ belles to quench the fire. The foresayde fyre, as farre as men coulde iudge, remoued from the East vnto the West: other write that it began from the North in manner of a cloud: and it seemed as it wer castyng flames of fyre from it like unto starres. At the first it was sene thre dayes and a halfe, at the lest an houre and a halfe afore daye, it lasted about an houre and an halfe, and vanisched

C.l. away

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a way almost an houre afore dai. Out  
of letters witten from Constance to  
vs. The nerte day after Childermas  
day in the ayre were sene certaine  
great and longe speares: two crosses  
the one of them was whyte, what  
the other was it is not shewed, and a  
rodde was sene in the ayre in maner  
of red bloode, so that some were rea-  
dye to crie fyre. Certaine fishermen  
that were on the riuier aboute two of  
the clocke after midnight dyd see this  
great and bryght monstorous thynge  
whiche continued vntil syre a clocke,  
but towarde Turgauia and Helui-  
tia was sene a starre wyth fyue seve-  
rall beames whiche were about three  
yards longe, & in other places it se-  
med in maner of a Hunters staffe.

The report goeth, that aboute Ko-  
tenilla a certayne heate was hearde  
in the ayre, even as it had bene liquor  
boylunge in a potte, the whiche by  
and by wente downe into the nerte  
hyll, and there wythin a whyle after  
it made the same noysse in the earth  
that it dyd before in the ayre. And as  
the letters doe testifie, whiche were  
sent

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sent from Hemminga.

On Childermas day betwene fyue  
and syre of the clocke in the mor-  
nyng, moore then the space of an  
whole houre, was sene in the ayre a  
great and an vnaccustomed rednes,  
towarde the north: in maner lyke vnto  
the fashion of an hemicycle and  
then it remoued somewhat towarde  
the Southe, and bare before it the  
lykenes of burning fyre, by reason  
whereof in certayn villages the bels  
were ronge to gyue warning, to help  
to quenche it.

In another part of this rednes ap-  
peared whyte forrowes: the whiche  
by and by went out of syght lyke vnto  
red fyre flames, so that they were  
sene shyning by reason of the bright-  
nes of the flame.

Another parte of it was discolored  
and al red in maner of bloode, and ter-  
rible of syght. The aire at first was  
not perceyued, and through this red-  
nes the starres were sene to cast out  
their beames. A man that watched in  
a towre at Horicke, saide that about  
midnight he felte an earthquake.

C.ii. And

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And a certain crafts man which was  
a glasier marueyed at the sodden ha-  
lings of the glasse in þ night, where  
of I maruaile that it was noted of  
none other, nor sene any where elles  
that we can heare. Mote of another  
epistole written by a certaine learned  
man. This wonder of the fyze in the  
ayre was not sene at Berne, but in þ  
fielde there were many that sawe it.  
I heare of nothynge that was sene  
beyonde Berne towarde Fraunce,  
nor at Friburge, nor at Lausanne.  
They do shewe of a certaine monste-  
rous thing sene in the fielde of Berne  
there apperead a syrp globe in the  
whiche a beare and a lyon seemed to  
fighte together. In the dominion of  
Gruenensis they write that a globe  
of fire did flye so nere a byllage, that  
a husbande man was a frayed of the  
burnyng of his house, because the fire  
was sene so neare vnto the top of the  
house. These thynges I wryte by re-  
port to satisfie your request vntyll I  
knowe them more certaintely. Thus  
sayde he.

Another wryteth that in the fielde  
of

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of Berne was sene another wonder  
of an hoste of men fyghtyng together  
but the authour I know not.

Also after thys foresayde wonder  
of fyze that was sene in the aire, thai  
is the thyrti day of December, which  
Was the last yere. M. D. L. X. at eyght  
a clocke before none, there was sene  
a fyze to aryle about Wade of Helvetia  
with a great thicke cloude.  
And when the husbande men of Ge-  
genspurge (which towne is in þ field  
of Surick) saw it thei ran together be-  
ing ready to quench it: by and by it va-  
nished away, so that it was not per-  
ceyued whether any fyze had ben in  
that place or no. Not withstandyng,  
this also may be thought to be a cer-  
taine wonder.

¶ The interpretation of the strang won-  
der, set furth by the authour, written vn-  
to a frende of his dwellyng in Vind-  
lick a countrey of Germany.

I owe you moche hearty thankes,  
that you do part amongst vs your  
interpretation vpon that fearefull  
and monstorous syghte, whiche you  
C. lli. did

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did not onely se in the atre at Helneta and Hanie, but at Algea and thorough out all Suenia, excepte at Auspurge, in which no man, no not the Watche men, did see any thing that daye, when notwithstanding it was sene two or thre mile of, and the good neyghbours there thought Auspurge dyd burne, and they did lamentably beholde the dukedom of Wittenberg Franconia & Thuringa, at the same houre and moment when ye did se it. I haue no naturall philosophie that thereby I might conjecture it to com, for in such a dead and cold tyme there coulde not happen such vapours nor such erhalations, that myghte cause such fyre to appear every where: no yet was the cause of the earthquake knownen amonge you, seeing it was heard to be no where els. Therefore I come to your interpretacion: and I hope that Christ wyll come shortly & reuenge his worde, & iudgethe world by fyre: Wythout you had rather thus to expounde it, that in all places wher this fyre was sene, the fire of the gospel shal so purely cleanse the people

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ple that all sparkes and ashes shalbe blowen quite away. But at Wauar and Austria wher this fire did not appeare, they shall periyhe in darernesse, excepte God be mercifull unto them.

¶ Of certayne other straunge tokenes  
and wonders.

The day before the fyre was sene in the ayre, that is the seuen and twenty day of December, in the ende of the yere. M. D. L. X. betwene the towne of Tübina and the dukedom of Wittenberge and the village of Jesingam, whiche is two miles distant from Tübina, suddenly in a certayne fielde there appeared a golfe which was fire and thirty fote depe, twenty fote broad, and about y earth no more then a common pitte, round of compas, cōteinynge of depth in water nine fote. Other spreade false rumors abrode & say that it was of such a depth that it could not be exprest. Also it is sayde, that it rained blode about the same time in many places of Germanye.

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The thirtene day of December, the  
yeare. M. D. LXX. at Vienna and Au-  
stria, there was an earthquake and a  
great tempest, and fearefull lighte-  
nyng. Towres, houses, and the Ca-  
thedral church of Sainct Steuen was  
burnte with lightenyng. The ayre  
was sene burne a longe tyme, as a  
certayne noble man of Mindeliche in  
his letters doeth witnes vnto vs.

We knowe for a suertye that late-  
ly in Fraunce, when the king had as-  
sembled þ head men of a citi together  
into hys owne presence: behold there  
appeared a great comet ouer the city  
which continued as long as þ assem-  
blie endured: that is. xviii. dayes, in  
the yeare. M. D. LXX. in the moneth of  
December.

¶ Of wonders or strange thyngs sene  
in the countrey of Pymont. Taken out  
of the letters written to a certain prince  
in the yeare. 1560. in the moneth of  
December.

A Chrasyne a fyre was sene in þ  
aire which lasted þre houres. At  
Trauill-

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Trauilla it rayned bloode as manys  
houres, that is to wit, þre houres.  
At Fosan were sene as it were, þre  
fyry cometes. In the plaine next vn-  
Hentaly there appeared a great num-  
bre of horsemen in the ayre. At Ca-  
ragnan ther was sene an earthquake  
which sounded lyke the wheles of a  
waggon. At Pinaroly was sene in þ  
aire the maner of a fyry linnen cloth:  
and many other strang wonders wer  
sene in sundrie other places.

¶ Of the heauenly goat (for so Aristo-  
tle calleth it) there was sene at Ca-  
thaline, a notable towne of Fraunce  
commonly called Cholos, in the yere  
of our lord. M. D. L. IIII. the syrte  
day of the moneth of Marche, betwen  
seven and eyght of the clocke at after  
none, aboute the Moone a burnyng  
fyre, in the which was sene, as it had  
bene the poynþ of a speare, going frō  
the East vnto þ West, & castynge out  
flames and fearful great burnynges.  
As Conrade Lycosthenes writteth in  
his booke of monstorous and straunge  
wonders.

C. b.      ¶

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¶ Of straunge wonders and prodigiouſe thynges, ſene in the ayre in the begynnyng of the yere. 1556.

In the begynnyng of the yere of our Lorde, a thouſande, fyue hundred fyfte and fyre: On a Sondaye after Christenmas day about the eue nyng tyde, was ſene with vs that dwel about Lavinga (as a certayne contre man of ours wrot in a letter to a frende of hys) a great lyghtning and it thundered erceadinglye, and not farre of from vs, a house stan- dyng in a village was ſtrycken with lyghtning and burnte downe. And the ayre opened verye wyde and brode, and dyd belche oute great and bright flames of fyre. The whiche tempeſt was about nyne of the clock at nyght, manye of the people were wonderfullly astonied and ſore afrayd in ſo muche that many of them were domme a longe tyme after.

Out of another Epiftle or letter of the ſame wonder: the ſame daye at nyght in Bohem, Silesia, and Mifnia, there was a terrible tempeſt, and

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and many men, cattell, great towres and churches wer ſtricken with lightning and perished with fyre. Also it rayned bloode and fyre. A towne of Melnicca foure myles diſtant from Praga, all the grounde of it was wilnigh conuoked with fire. The church of our Lady at Praga was burnte with lightning: and the church of S. Anne that is in the mount was lyke wise burned. Two Churches beyng about two mile diſtant from Liptia, were also burnt with lightning. And it rained blood abundantly in þ same place: and two camelles were ſene in the ayre devouring a harned man.

In the ſame yere. M. D. L. VI. the eleuenth day of Januari, at Auguſt and Vindclik towarde the Alpes, in the night the air opened, and burned for a while moſt fearesfull to beholde, and ſemed to threaten to be the lat-ter day. At Micchenhusa in Bauaria, ther was ſene in þ night ſuch brightnes, that þ candle light in Yeta war ed darkie, and when the candles were put out, the brightnes of theire ſuf-ſiced the ſor light, thre houres ſpace.

The

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The same yere of our lord a thousand fyue hundred and thre score, the syxth day of September in the towne of Marchia and Culterine, at nyne a clocke at after noone. Innumerale flames of fyre dyd shyne on every side in the aire w<sup>i</sup> great brightnes. And in the myddes of the element there ap- peared two syry beames. To conclude, as I read moreouer, in an vnknowen authoz, a boyce was heard whiche said Woe, woe, vnto the churche. Thus sayeth James Fincelius, wri- tyng of the wonders done in hys tyme

¶

Of certaine vvondervulle strange  
visions and merueyplous tokens.

Out of the Prologuе of Joachim Camerary of Pabe, in the Chro- nicle of Niccephorus, translated by him into Latine and expouned, which boke was printed at Basill by John Dporinus.

A fter that I chaunsed to liue in that tyme in the whiche the comon wealth hangeth either in miserable ruine, either in pernicious alteracion, or els in very behemene and troublesome assayres. Trulye (good reader) I can not heartely re-joyce, no: inwardly be merye, wyth any ryches or honour that is coueted or desired in the publik weale. For I pray you what is done or attempted almoste in any place, that pertaineth not vnto h<sup>e</sup> decay of h<sup>e</sup> comon wealth: What obstinacie is in men: What malice and hatred: What couetousnes and greedy gatheryng: What de- ske

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desyre of reuengement: What ambitious lust to rule? Not notwithstanding these things be couered, and do cloke them selues vnder moste honoste names, as constancie, magnanimitie or valiaunt corage, severitie, and dignitic or honour. And by the law of God and man, many are compelled to obey theyr malice. Amonges these thynges nothyng almost is done by deliberat counsell, and neither is any paynes taken in prouidynge and lokyng diligently to things of importance, neyther any chaungyng of sentence or any correction for vice. All thinges be lawfull to them that be in authoritie and are myghtye. Vnre thynge are made vnholye: publicke thynge are made private: peace is tourned into stryfe: so that there is no order set in thinges. Every state, and degré, and condicione, is geuen ouer to mocking and disdeyning. Deadly hatred is exercised in every place: to the fulfylling of the which hatred helpe is sone calld from euery syde. They do practis crueltie and tyranny lyke unto the brutish Barbarians. The which being

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ing of them selues moste filthye and vile, doe all thynges contrarye to the lawes and ordinances of the elders: the common wealth which the good men left unto their posterite, among these, miste of necessitie periythe and vtterly decaye. But althoough the situation of the Starres, and manye straunge and monstorous things doe foreshewe and warne vs of this: notwithstanding the moste evident tokenes of the mutations of the former causes, by the whiche may lawfully be taken moste certayne conjectures of that which is to com. Whiche to declare in a few wordes shall not be (as I thynke) disagreable to the matter. And the foretellings of astrologic, of the moving of starres, of the eclipsis and coniunction of the Sun & moone and of the flames of the cometes, be al most knownen unto every man: other wonders also for their ostenes do the leste moue mens mindes. But what visions haue bene sene aswell by the that waked as them that slept (interpretated by soothsayers) it wer to long to declare or rather infinite.

One

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One thyng I doe remember well,  
(if a man may lawfully speake on this  
fashion) I did se in my dreame one ho-  
ly and heauenly likenes or picture.  
A certayne good and godly man dyd  
see with in these fewe yeres in a visi-  
on (as it seemed vnto hym) a great ar-  
mye of men dyd skirmishe and syghte  
together, and were ready with theyz  
weapons in their handes to fyre vil-  
lags, townes, & cities, and to waste &  
destroye the feldes: manye men fell  
down: yet not wythstanding it could  
not be perceyued who had the victory  
Also this battel was so intermedded  
that it coulde not clearely be sene of  
whome it was done nor agaynst  
whome. In one place also he behelde,  
and sawe syue wrytyngez or scriptu-  
res, of syue distincte and chaungeable  
coloures, in þ whiche was shewed di-  
uers names & divers sentences, which  
were sene in þ aire after this maner.

Blacke for the Jewes, and Moses  
lawe. Whyte for the Christians and  
only sayth of Christe. Yelowe of the  
pardons of the byshop of Rome. Red  
for the Turkes, Saracenes, Maho-  
meth

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hometh the messenger of onely God:  
Yelowishe, for the workes and liber-  
ties of the Anabaptists. What these  
thynges do signifie can not be hyd to  
any man that wyll studye to knowe  
what shal happen wythin these fewe  
yeres, and what is nowe done.

Aboute the same tyme, the maner  
of a longe histoyre was sene in the  
cloudes: whiche afterwarde was set  
furth in a picture, drawen out and pu-  
blisched at Felgicke, in thys maner  
hereafter folowyng.

There appeared an armed man on  
horsebacke wyth a speare charged in  
his hande, and readye for to runne a  
course. And besydes thys, was sene  
the lykenesse of the Emperour Char-  
les the syxth, with a crowne vpon his  
heade: and neare vnto it a hogges  
snoute, somwhat hygher there was  
sene two Lyons rampyng and lea-  
ping agaynst thre other Lions: and  
a lytle beneth them, two great Dra-  
gons spuyng out flames of fyre.

And after thys was sene great ar-  
mies of men of warre, aswell by sea  
as by lande, and euerye where was

D. i.      cruell

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cruell burning of townes and castels  
and villages. And ther was also sene  
in the ayre a Pecocke wythout feete  
hauyng no wynges : and neare vnto  
hym there was a Dragon. Also in the  
same place was an Egle hauyng the  
greatest parte of hym hyd behynde a  
banke : and aboute the banke was a  
lytle Egle. Lykewise was sene a Li-  
on crowned lying on hys backe, whō  
a Cocke dyd strycke on the throte.  
After this there were gathered toge-  
ther many and diuers beastes, wyth  
horrible formes and shapēs : and all  
monsterous beastes, except the wylde  
Unicorne which the Grekes doe call  
Monoceros and a verye fayre and great  
huge Elephant. By and by another  
armye of men appeared agayne bur-  
nyng and destroying : and a Cocke  
defendyng hym selfe agaynst a Lyon  
whose head was seemed to be cut of.

And laste of all, there was sene a  
great lake, in the whiche were drow-  
ned (as they doe declare) townes, and  
great Churches, theyr steppes beyng  
sene to appeare aboue the water: and  
a Camell was sene alone vpon the  
banke

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banke, with his head in þ lake dryn-  
kyng. Wonderfull many flamyng  
Dragons were sene, breathyng out  
flames of fyre and much venym cue-  
ry where.

Unto me truly these thynges seime  
not vnpossible to chaunce, specially  
and chiefly to those people whiche  
doe trouble and molest the worlde in  
this oure age, with great verations  
and sore afflictions.

Furthermore, it is declared vnto  
vs, that thys pere there are very ma-  
nye monsterous byrthes, bothe of  
mankynde, and also of many and di-  
uers other kyndes of beastes.

Amonge the whiche, was the notable  
great Monkecalfe (that is a calfe like  
a Monke) and before hym an Aste, a  
man, and a fishe, of mired formes and  
diuers shapēs. And after that there  
came furth another monster whiche  
was a syfhe lyke a Monke.

For in the bowels of the man was  
founde iron (as we haue often tymes  
proued it truw) what doth that signi-  
fie but inwarde commocion or ciuill  
hatred or stryffe?

D. li.

There,

The history of strange wonders.

Therefore these thynges shewynge them selues so often tymes, and so wonderfull, berelye we ought to vnderstante and to thynke, that the moving and working of nature is wraffed out of frame, and the state and condicione of men to be tourned out of course, & that the effectes of nature being weake & sickle may no longer continue nor endure: for even as monstorous byrthes doe not lyue longe, so likewise the degenerate and monstorous state of thys corrupt wold shall not laste longe.

As I doe remembre (and as I sayd before to certayne men whiche tolde me, that a mayde at Khenie lyued wythout meate and dynke) I dyd tel the how that she could not lyue long nor continue without foode: as if one shoulde saye, it were a wonderfull and a merueilous thyng to be done, yf that common wealth shoulde not decaye and perlyshe, where the rulers (which ought onely to norishe and to vpholde the same) eyther be not able to gouerne it, or elles be farre absent and a great way from it.

But

The history of strange wonders.

But we see most manifest signes and evident tokens of forewaryng. For as by the rysyng and the goynge downe of the Sunne, we knowe the commyng of the day & the nyght. So in lyke maner I doe suppose, that after the breaking vp and dissoluynge of the lawe and discipline of the christian common wealth, some great fall and destruction muste of necessarie follow, and after lyke sort we maye conecture other ioperdyes and daungers for to come.

To God be all honor and glory, for these and all other his wonderfull workes, declared and shewen unto vs.

So be it.

PSALM 19.

The heauens declare the glory of God,  
and the firmament sheweth the  
worke of hys hand.

Imprynted at Lon  
don by Roulande  
Hall dvvellynge in  
Goldynge Lane at  
the signe of the  
three arro-  
vves.

1561.